

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
Master of Arts in Education: Middle Grades Education (6-9)
Master of Arts in Teaching in Middle Grades Education

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The advanced Middle Grades Education degree program is designed for experienced teachers who possess or who are eligible to hold an “A” license in middle school education. Building on the background knowledge and experience of the classroom teacher, the program seeks to strengthen advanced academic competence through two teaching concentrations in the disciplines, and to relate advanced understandings of the learner, learning process, curriculum, and instructional strategies to the unique needs and characteristics of the emerging adolescent.

The Middle Grades Education MAED program is a 36-hour program which generally takes candidates two years to complete. Students pursuing the M.A.Ed. are encouraged to complete the program’s professional studies core within their initial 12 hours of graduate study. The specialty area course EDN 526, The Middle School Philosophy, Curriculum, and Instruction, is a capstone experience taken toward the completion of the student’s program of study. All M.A.Ed. candidates are required to construct and present products of learning such as action research projects and professional portfolios that are aligned with the advanced NCDPI Master’s degree competencies.

The Master of Arts in Teaching (M.A.T.) is an interdisciplinary degree option within the Teacher Education degree program. The M.A.T. is intended for graduates from accredited colleges or universities with an undergraduate major in humanities, sciences, or social sciences who have few, if any, formal courses in education. The program is available only to those individuals who have not earned licensure and who are seeking licensure in the teaching field in which they wish to earn the degree.

The program will include graduate work in the teaching pedagogy and advanced professional education coursework in one of the following areas: Art Education, English Education, Mathematics Education, Middle Grades Education, Music Education, Physical Education, Science Education, and Social Studies Education. A 10 week internship is required if the candidate does not provide appropriate documentation of at least one year of successful K-12 teaching experience.

Program Goals

M.A. Ed. Middle Grades

The Program will prepare the teacher to

1. Develop an understanding of the history and philosophy of middle grades education and theories about its future development, including organizational components and assessment and evaluation in the middle school setting.

2. Develop an understanding of middle school curriculum and practices appropriate for the emerging adolescent learner.
3. Develop a greater understanding of the theoretical base, research, and exemplary practices of middle grades education.
4. Demonstrate advanced knowledge of the content and pedagogy of the middle school curriculum.
5. Improve educational practice through self-reflection, self-evaluation, and action research.

M.A.T. with Middle Grades Specialization

The goals of the program are designed to prepare a student to be able to:

1. Demonstrate breadth of general knowledge, as well as depth of knowledge, in the selected discipline area necessary for effective instructional decision-making.
2. Demonstrate a well-articulated knowledge of elementary, middle or secondary school communities and issues that impact teaching.
3. Exhibit knowledge of and show respect toward diverse cultural values and exceptionalities;
4. Communicate effectively in Standard oral and written English.
5. Adapt instructional strategies to the developmental and learning needs of individuals, including students with special needs and students from culturally diverse backgrounds.
6. Establish a classroom climate conducive to the learning, social, and emotional needs of students.
7. Choose objectives consistent with state and local curriculum guidelines, the learning needs of students, and guidelines established by learned societies.
8. Utilize technology in ways that enhance teaching and learning experiences.
9. Employ and analyze appropriate assessments and evaluative procedures.
10. Establish a pattern of reflective practice and scholarly inquiry culminating in confidence, professionalism, and effectiveness in the role of teacher.
11. Demonstrate knowledge of the history, philosophy and sociology of public education pertaining to the demonstration of best practices in education.
12. Meet departmental requirements for a capstone course, product, and/or examination.

Standards for Middle Grades Teachers **STANDARDS AND INDICATORS**

Standard 1: Middle level teachers understand the major concepts, theories, and research related to young adolescent development, and they provide opportunities that support student development and learning.

- Indicator 1: Middle level teachers understand the intellectual, physical, social, emotional, and moral development of young adolescents and use that knowledge to establish productive learning environments based on mutually respectful relationships.

- Indicator 2: Middle level teachers demonstrate with enthusiasm their multi-faceted role as a teacher of young adolescents - role model, coach, and mentor - sharing the responsibility for engaging them in their own learning.
- Indicator 3: Middle level teachers understand the role of classroom, family, peer group, community, and society in young adolescent development and engage students in activities related to their corresponding responsibilities, needs, and growing self-awareness.
- Indicator 4: Middle level teachers understand issues of young adult health and developing sexuality.

Standard 2: Middle level teachers understand major concepts, principles, theories and research underlying the philosophical foundations of the developmentally responsive middle level programs and schools, and they work successfully within these organizational components.

- Indicator 1: Middle level teachers understand, articulate and apply developmentally responsive practices that reflect the philosophical foundations, rationale, and characteristics of middle level programs (e.g. flexible scheduling, common planning periods, advisor/advisee program).
- Indicator 2: Middle level teachers know and analyze the historical and contemporary models of schooling and best practices for the education of young adolescents.
- Indicator 3: Middle level teachers understand, support, and work successfully within teams and with colleagues to maximize student learning and school improvement.

Standard 3: Middle level teachers understand major concepts, principles, theories, standards, and research related to middle grades curriculum and use this knowledge in their practice.

- Indicator 1: Middle level teachers demonstrate their command of content knowledge by designing, modifying, implementing, and assessing curricula based on the North Carolina Standard Course of Study (NCSCS) and other relevant middle level resources (e.g. national content standards, local content standards).
- Indicator 2: Middle level teachers plan interdisciplinary curriculum based on core and elective curricula that are relevant, challenging, and exploratory.

Standard 4: Middle level teachers understand the major concepts, principles, theories, and research related to working collaboratively with family and community members, and they use that knowledge to maximize the learning of young adolescents.

- Indicator 1: Middle level teachers understand and plan instruction that connects subjects to the diverse experiences of all young adolescents.

Standard 5: Middle level teachers understand and use the central concepts, tools of inquiry, standards, and structures of content in their teaching field(s) and create meaningful learning experiences that develop young adolescents' competence in subject matter and skills.

- Indicator 1: Middle level teachers know and use their depth and breadth of content knowledge to maximize student learning through effective content-specific teaching strategies.
- Indicator 2: Middle level teachers know and are committed to teaching in ways that help young adolescents understand the interdisciplinary connections between course-specific knowledge, other areas of curriculum, and their life experiences and interests.

Standard 6: Middle level teachers understand, value, and integrate literacy skills (i.e., reading, writing, speaking, and listening) into all content areas.

- Indicator 1: Middle level teachers integrate literacy skills into mathematics, science, social studies and/or language arts.
- Indicator 2: Middle level teachers understand the processes of reading and strategies to enhance the comprehension, interpretation, and evaluation of text in mathematics, science, social studies, and/or language arts for all students, including those who read below grade level.
- Indicator 3: Middle level teachers understand the connection between reading and writing and model a wide range of strategies effective to purpose, audience, and context in mathematics, science, social studies, and/or language arts.
- Indicator 4: Middle level teachers understand the writing process and model this process in mathematics, science, social studies, and/or language arts.
- Indicator 5: Middle level teachers understand the nature of the ESL learner and model a wide range of effective strategies for this diverse population.

Standard 7: Middle level teachers understand and use the major concepts, principles, theories, and research related to effective instruction, and they employ a variety of strategies for a developmentally appropriate climate to meet the varying abilities and learning styles of all young adolescents.

- Indicator 1: Middle level teachers understand, value, plan, and use a variety of teaching and learning strategies that motivate young adolescents with varying abilities, learning styles, and interests.
- Indicator 2: Middle level teachers provide experiences that actively encourage observing, questioning, and interpreting knowledge and ideas from diverse perspectives.
- Indicator 3: Middle level teachers maximize the learning of young adolescents by establishing positive learning environments and employing effective classroom management techniques.

Standard 8: Middle level teachers understand and use formal and informal assessment strategies to evaluate learning and teaching to ensure the continuous intellectual, social, and physical development of young adolescents.

- Indicator 1: Middle level teachers understand and use a variety of traditional and alternative assessment measures and communicate the results knowledgeably and

responsibly to appropriate audiences (e.g. students' families, educators, community members).

- Indicator 2: Middle level teachers know, plan, and implement instructional practices based on formal and informal student assessment (including student self-assessment) and use those results to monitor and improve their teaching.
- Indicator 3: Middle level teachers maintain useful records and create effective plans for evaluation of student work and achievement.

Standard 9: Middle level teachers understand the complexity of teaching young adolescents, and they engage in practices and behaviors that develop their competence as professionals.

- Indicator 1: Middle level teachers engage in and support professional development practices (e.g. consult with colleagues, attend professional development activities, and seek additional resources to enhance competence).
- Indicator 2: Middle level teachers understand and reflect on young adolescent development, the instructional process, and professional relationships in addressing the diverse needs of young adolescents.